

HUMAN RESOURCES

Our Calling

The synod's Human Resources (HR) Department oversees the personnel functions for synod workers, including development, communication and implementation of personnel policies, recruitment, compensation, benefits, performance management, and employee relations. HR provides support to the Center for Mission and Ministry (CMM) leaders and employees, as well as the WELS synodical entities. HR also provides advice to supervisors on matters ranging from federal and state legal requirements to recruiting and developing the members of their teams.

Human Resources also serves as a resource to WELS congregations and to affiliated groups and entities on the matters mentioned above as well as for risk management and federal and state legal requirements related to personnel matters. Further, in addition to legally mandated reporting to authorities, any charge, report, or allegation of sexual misconduct or physical abuse that has been made of an incident involving pastors, teachers, vicars, full- or part-time employees, and volunteers in any capacity must be reported to the synod president, director of Lutheran Schools, or director of Human Resources.

Our Current Situation

Beyond day to day human resource management activities, there are a few key activities/accomplishments that deserve special attention:

- Creation of a wels.net resource center HR site to assist WELS workers and members with various WELS HR needs. Currently dedicated to compensation administration to assist in understanding changes adopted by the synod in convention on August 3, 2017.
- Staffed the following positions within the last 12 months at the synod office:
 - Director, Africa Mission Operations, Missions
 - Mission Journey's Coordinator, Missions
 - Administrative Assistant, Commission on Evangelism
 - Administrative Assistant, Christian Aid and Relief
 - Technical Support Specialist, Technology
 - Accountant, Financial Services
 - Missions Liaison, Promotions/Campus Ministry, Missions
 - Missions Production Manager, Missions
 - Missions Advancement Coordinator, Missions
- HR due diligence—HR continues to perform due diligence on the vendors and systems in place within the HR structure. This has been, and will continue to be, an important step to ensure that both the outcomes provided, as well as the costs, are appropriate and expected.
- Synod Board/Committee Nominee Vetting - HR aids in process of filling board/committee openings for Synodical Council appointed positions, mainly with vetting of nominees to establish willingness to serve, procuring resume and/or bio forms, and creation of a central database to maintain all nominee data and vacancy records.
- Updated human resource materials on the existing HR Cloud site for WELS organizations to provide compensation, benefit, and policy information for called workers.
- ACA Reporting & Compliance – Per Affordable Care Act compliance requirements, large employers must file annual reports and monitor measurement periods to comply with the ACA's employer mandate. HR manages process for the CMM and the five synodical entities.
- HR continues to work with congregations and COP members related to personnel matters and general compensation issues.

A Look Ahead

Key area of focus will be to review current operations and identify where process improvements can be implemented. Over the next biennium HR will, with God's guidance and blessings:

- Develop compensation guidelines, matrices, and models for the 2019–21 biennium.
- Expand wels.net resource center HR site to further assist WELS workers and members with HR needs beyond the current emphasis on understanding called worker compensation.
- Provide continued training with synod leaders to continue to reinforce and develop the supervisory skills required.
- Continue to work with all synod entities to identify areas that can be developed, improved, or modified to create better efficiency and effectiveness.
- Assist members from both an informative as well as practical aspect.
- Update and maintain both the wels.net resource center HR site and WELS HR Cloud site to ensure information and details provided assist members from both an informational as well as practical aspect.
- Full utilization of the ADP HR & payroll software modules and support for the CMM and the subsidiary schools.

The Human Resources Advisory Committee (HRAC) is in place and operating to assist the HR function as needed in ensuring policies and procedures are established and applied across all synodical entities. Further, the HRAC ensures that these systems are efficient and effective, that HR is staffed appropriately to include the requisite training and experience, and to investigate and review any issue related to HR when called upon. The committee's focus has changed from assistance and direction for day-to-day operational HR issues to assistance when requested with strategic human resources areas such as compensation/benefit design, succession planning, and organization architecture/design.

Questions can be directed to hro@wels.net or by calling (414) 256-3268.

Mr. Dennis Maurer, reporter